

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 07455 141230Z

43

ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6363

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 7455

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SA, MO

SUBJECT: CROWN PRINCE FAHD'S VISIT TO MAGHRIB

REF: JIDDA 7399

SUMMARY: PRINCE FAHD IS TO EXPLORE POSSIBILITIES OF RESOLVING THE DISPUTE BETWEEN MOROCCO, MAURITANIA, AND ALGERIA. SAG BELIEVES NOW IS A PROPITIOUS TIME FOR SUCH AN EFFORT. IF PROSPECTS SEEM TO WARRANT, SAG WILL INVITE CHIEFS OF STATE CONCERNED TO MEET IN SAUDI ARABIA TO TRY TO WORK OUT A SOLUTION MUCH AS WAS DONE WITH REGARD TO LEBANESE CONFLICT. IF SAG SUCCEEDS IN NORTH AFRICA, IT BELIEVES ARAB RADICALS WILL BE MORE ISOLATED AND LESS INFLUENTIAL THROUGHOUT THE WORLD THAN AT ANY TIME IN MANY YEARS.

1. MFA UNDER SECRETARY AL-MANSOURI TOLD CHARGE NOVEMBER 13 THAT PRINCE FAHD WAS EXPECTED TO REMAIN IN NORTH AFRICA AT LEAST UNTIL THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 18. THE OSTENSIBLE REASON FOR HIS GOING HAD BEEN TO ATTEND THE MOROCCAN NATIONAL DAY, BUT HE WAS REALLY GOING TO SEE WHAT COULD BE DONE TO BRING TO AN END THE MOROCCAN/ALGERIAN/MAURITANIAN
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PAGE 02 JIDDA 07455 141230Z

DISPUTE. MANSOURI SAID THERE WERE TWO REASONS FOR THE SAG'S

ACTION AT THIS TIME: FIRST, SAUDI ARABIA'S EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF LEBANON APPEAR TO BE SUCCEEDING, AND THE SAG IS THEREFORE ABLE TO ATTEMPT MEDIATION ELSEWHERE; SECOND, SAUDI ARABIA THINKS THE TIME MAY BE RIGHT FOR THE NORTH AFRICAN PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED. THE ALGERIANS, HE SAID, HAVE TRIED UNSUCCESSFULLY THIS LAST YEAR TO RALLY INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT BEHIND THEIR ASSISTANCE TO THE POLISARIO FRONT. THEY HAD FAILED AT THE NONALIGNED, OAU, ARAB LEAGUE, AND MUSLIM WORLD LEAGUE CONFERENCES. CONSEQUENTLY, BOUMEDIENNE HAD RECENTLY TOLD THE SAG THAT ALGERIA WANTED ONLY TO FIND SOME SOLUTION THAT WOULD RESPECT THE VIEWS OF THE PARTIES CONCERNED, INCLUDING THE POLISARIO FRONT.

2. IF PRINCE FAHD'S TALKS IN NORTH AFRICA ARE ENCOURAGING, THE NORTH AFRICAN LEADERS WILL BE ASKED TO A CHIEF OF STATE CONFERENCE IN SAUDI ARABIA, WHERE THE SAG WILL MAKE AN ALL OUT EFFORT TO SETTLE MATTERS--AS IT HAD TRIED TO DO REGARDING THE LEBANESE CIVIL WAR.

3. MANSOURI SAID HE HOPED SAUDI ARABIA'S FRIENDS WOULD NOTE THE DIRECTION AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF SAUDI DIPLOMACY. EVER SINCE PRINCE FAHD HAD BECOME MORE ACTIVE IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS, THE KINGDOM HAS WORKED DELIBERATELY TO ISOLATE EXTREMISTS AND TO STRENGTHEN MODERATES THROUGHOUT THE ARAB WORLD. FAHD BEGAN LATE IN 1974 BY SETTLING THE KINGDOM'S BOUNDARY DISPUTES WITH THE UAE AND OMAN. MOST RECENTLY IT HAD WORKED SUCCESSFULLY TO BRING EGYPT AND SYRIA BACK TO A POSITION THAT COULD END THE FIGHTING IN LEBANON, MODERATE THE EXTREMISM OF THE PLO, AND LEAVE RADICAL IRAQ IMPUISSANT. IF SAUDI ARABIA COULD SUCCEED IN NORTH AFRICA--WHERE ALGERIA AND LIBYA WERE WORRYING ABOUT THEIR GROWING ISOLATION--RADICAL INFLUENCE IN THE ARAB WORLD WOULD HAVE DROPPED TO THE LOWEST LEVEL IN MANY YEARS.
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